



## FOURTH QUARTER REPORT

# ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO EXCOMBATANT CHILDREN IN COLOMBIA



IOM • OIM



**ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO EXCOMBATANT CHILDREN  
QUARTER REPORT**

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## I. CONTEXT

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of February, the government of president Andrés Pastrana decided to end the peace dialogues held with the guerrilla group FARC. In his speech to the nation, president Pastrana argues that the demilitarized zone has been used for war and not for peace and that the FARC has not shown interest in accomplishing any agreements, but has instead continued with violent actions against the civil population, has kidnapped political leaders and has built airports in the demilitarized zone for the transport of illicit drugs.

The rupture of the peace negotiations has created uncertainty and speculations on what the future will look like and what will be the reactions of the different parts involved in the conflict. On one hand, it was expected that the guerrilla would withdraw in order to regroup their forces, maybe resulting in a massive demobilization of children; but on the other hand, an escalation in the conflict could also result in an augment in the recruitment of children; or that the isolation of the guerrilla would impede the separation of child-soldiers from the guerrilla.

Undoubtedly, the results of the presidential elections on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May will present a different scenario in relation to the conflict and in relation to children's participation in the armed conflict. The Human Rights Ombudsman Office, is reasoning that it is fundamental to join forces and present a consolidated plan of action to the new government in order to promote the construction of a public policy that responds to the restitution of children's rights.

Legal experts from the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF) inform that the Legal Code for Minors permits the attention to excombatant children, whether they are considered as transgressors or in need of protection. In both cases, the so-called specialized attention centers are a way to continue to attend children that disengage from the armed groups.

In relation to human rights, the public opinion argues that all armed groups have failed to follow and respect the International Humanitarian Law. In the same way, it is considered as important the lobbying for the reestablishment of children's rights, promoting the "Convenio del Buen Trato" (The Good Treatment Agreement), and the integration of the child soldiers issue in every peace negotiation.

The issue of child soldiers in Colombia is not any longer only a national issue, but has become the concern of other countries as well, as is the case of an excombatant child that ran away from the violence in search for his mother in Brazil. In the same way, news were made when two Colombian children affected by antipersonnel mines, were invited to the "Mines Action" in Canada. In general, the means of communication have treated the issue of children's rights and violence in a serious and objective way<sup>1</sup>.

Within this scenario, the Assistance Program to Excombatant Children has developed activities in the following areas: a) the strengthening of Specialized Attention Centers (CAEs) and youth houses; b) the design of a contingency plan; and c) the strengthening of a strategy with legal basis with the purpose to assure the respect and reestablishment of the excombatant children's rights.

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex I: News during the quarter

## **II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

After one year of implementation, the Program has succeeded in establishing an attention model to excombatant children divided into four phases: 1) the access to the Program through a Transit Home; 2) the establishment of eight Specialized Attention Centers (CAEs); 3) the organization of four youth houses as a mean to social reestablishment; and 4) Reference or Follow-up Centers. A transversal theme has been the issue of family reunification.

During the quarter, the Program has concentrated its efforts in the evaluation and the pedagogical, cultural, familiar and therapeutic strengthening of the process. Professionals from ICBF and IOM have accompanied all phases.<sup>2</sup>

The reinforcement of the Program has contributed to its sustainability, as ICBF has started to assume part of the financing. For example, the establishment of a transitory attention center and a plan for the incorporation of professionals to the ICBF are two of the actions carried out during the quarter.

Further, new lines of work have been incorporated into the Program, as is the campaign for prevention of recruitment of children on behalf of the armed groups in major risk zones; the work with excombatant children from minority groups; and the presentation of a line of publications.

## **III. ACCUMULATED RESULTS**

1. The creation of a Transit Home, as a reception center for the children who are accessing the Program
2. The launch of two regional Specialized Attention Centers in Antioquia and Valle del Cauca
3. The expansion of services offered in each center, in the areas of training.
4. The initiation of the third phase in the attention process, with the opening of four youth houses in Bogotá to the benefit of a total of 20 youth.
5. The concluding of two investigations: one related to family reintegration; and the other related to family encounters. These studies are considered to be an important input to the formulation of the Program's Family Policy.
6. The creation and publication of the "Ruta Jurídica" (Legal Procedures to Follow for Excombatant Children) and the organization of a workshop based on this document, in order to train judges, family defenders, the army, teachers and other agents working or having contact with excombatant children.
7. The starting-up of income-generating projects, as part of the social reestablishment.
8. The establishment of an Operational Committee, in order to study and create pedagogical instruments for each phase.
9. The design of various documents and publications on the development of an attention program to excombatant children
  - A video
  - A booklet
  - Pedagogical workdays
  - An explorative study on the attention in two of the specialized attention centers
10. The beginning of a mapping of all institutions related to the SNBF (National System for Family Welfare) with possibility to attend excombatant children in case of a massive demobilization.
11. The strengthening of the national ICBF team, through consultants, specialists and material inputs.

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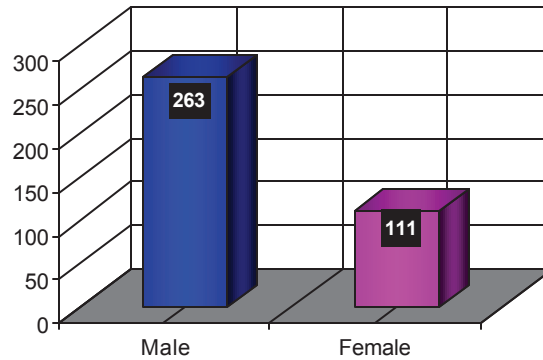
<sup>2</sup> National work-day between the 20th and the 21st of February, 2002

#### IV. ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

##### A. Children attended since the beginning of the Program<sup>3</sup>

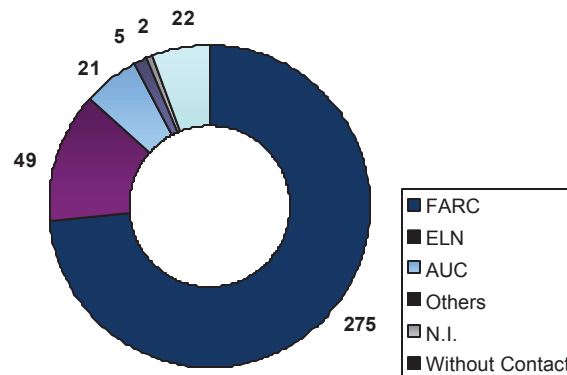
374 children have been attended through the Program since its start in November 1999<sup>4</sup>.

*Graphic #1: Number of children attended, divided by sex*



As can be seen in the graphic above, out of the total of children attended, 263 are boys and 111 are girls, corresponding to 70% and 30% respectively<sup>5</sup>.

*Graphic #2: Participation in the conflict, divided by armed groups*



The majority of the children attended in the Program, have been related to the FARC; 275 (74%) children out of the total 374 children were related to this group, 49 (13%) were related to the ELN and 21 children (5%) were related to the AUC. In relation to this last group, it is worth mentioning that they are the least affected by desertion, as the children that are used for construction works, in order to strengthen its military presence, receive a salary<sup>6</sup>.

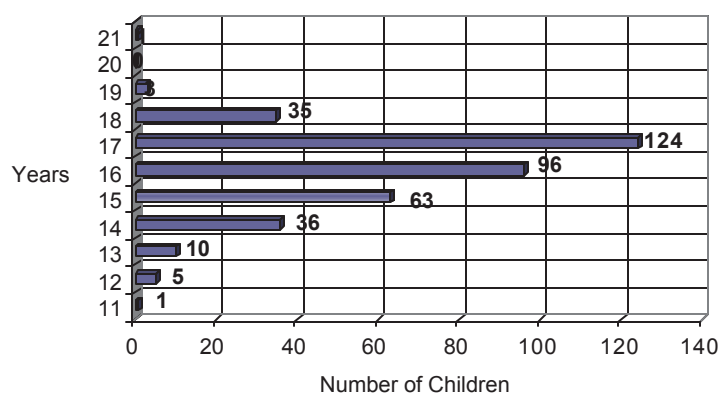
<sup>3</sup> The numbers correspond to the period between November 1999, when the first Attention Center was opened, and March 2002.

<sup>4</sup> See Annex II: Numbers on children attended in the Specialised Attention Centers.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

Graphic #3: Number of children attended, divided by age

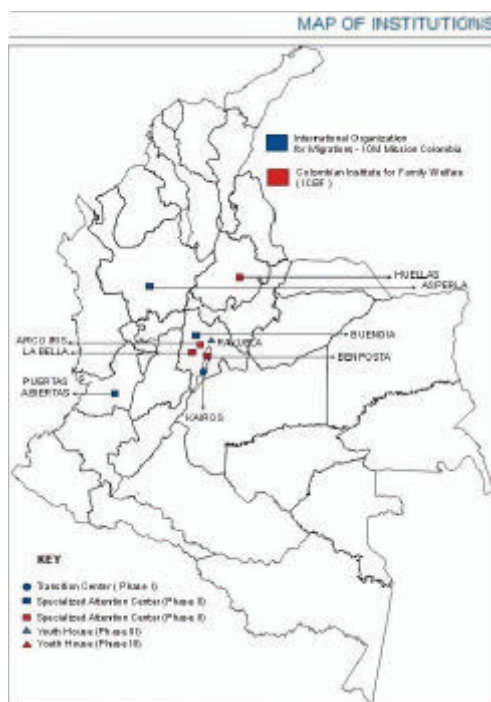


The age of the children attended by the Program is ranging from 11 to 19 years, but the majority of the children are 16 or 17 years (59% of the total), followed by the group of 15-years old (17%).<sup>7</sup> The separation from the armed groups is given in a stage where the adolescent is trying to change the direction of his or her life and where the capacity to adapt to new situations is developing.

#### B. Children attended during the quarter (January to March 2002)

The Program has attended 170 children during the present quarter in the Specialized Attention Centers and youth houses located in four regions, as follows:

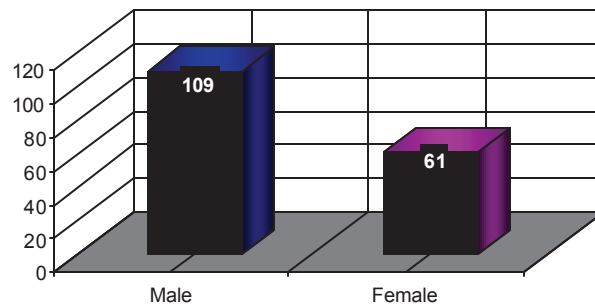
Map #1: Location of the centers attending excombatant children



<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

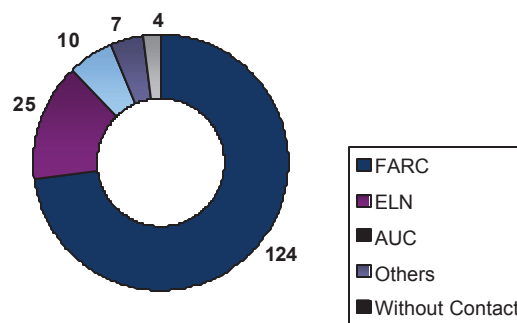
Below, the reader will find a characterization of the beneficiaries divided on sex, armed group, type of disengagement from the armed groups and age.

*Graphic #4: Number of children attended, divided by sex*



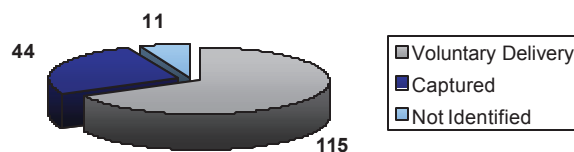
Out of a total of 170 children attended, 64% corresponds to boys and 35% to girls, representing a 5% increase of excombatant girls attended in respect to earlier quarters<sup>8</sup>.

*Graphic #5: Participation in the conflict, divided by armed groups*



The relation to different armed groups has not varied significantly during this quarter; 73% of the children attended belonged to the FARC and 25% to the ELN. Nevertheless, when it comes to children attended that belonged to the AUC, the number doubled in relation to earlier quarters. Out of the total of 21 children attended since November 1999, which belonged to the AUC, 10 were attended during this period<sup>9</sup>.

*Graphic #6: Type of Disengagement from armed groups*



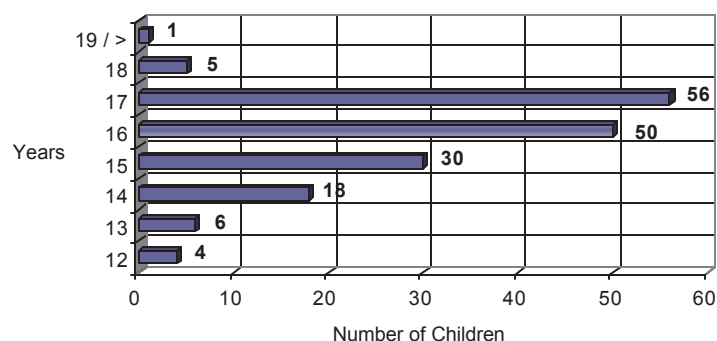
The voluntary separation from the armed groups has always represented the most frequent way of getting out of the conflict, corresponding to a 68% of the children attended during this quarter.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

Disengagement through capture corresponds to a stable 26%, even though the numbers of confrontations between the army and the armed groups has increased.<sup>10</sup>

Graphic #7: Number of children attended, divided by age



When it comes to age, the figures have not changed in relation to previous quarters. The tendency continues with the majority of the children disengaging from armed groups at the age of 16 - 17 (62%), followed by ages 15 (18%) and 14 (11%).<sup>11</sup>

Lastly, the 170 children attended are distributed on the following Specialized Attention Centers:

Table # 1: Numbers of children attended in the Specialized Attention Centres

Attention Centers	# of children present in the Program on the December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2001	# of children accessing the Program during the present Quarter	Total attended during the Quarter
Arco Iris (Cundinamarca)	20	9	29
Remedios La Bella (Cundinamarca)	20	14	34
Buendía (Cundinamarca)	19	17	36
Benposta (Cundinamarca)	9	1	10
Huellas (Santander)	22	0	22
Semillas de Paz (Santander)	0	5	5
Puertas Abiertas (Valle)	16	5	21
Asperla (Antioquia)	0	13	13
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>170</b>

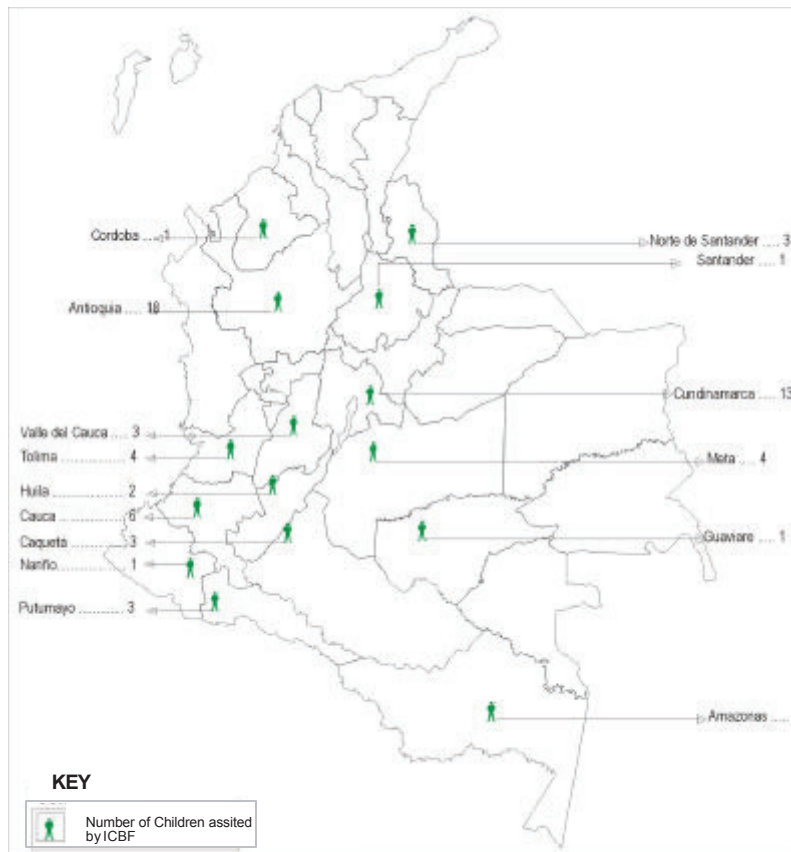
As can be observed in the table above, 106 children out of the total of 170 were already being attended in the beginning of the quarter and 64 new children accessed the program during the period. The children attended came from different regions that can be appreciated in the following map.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



Map #2: Origin of the excombatant children, divided by department

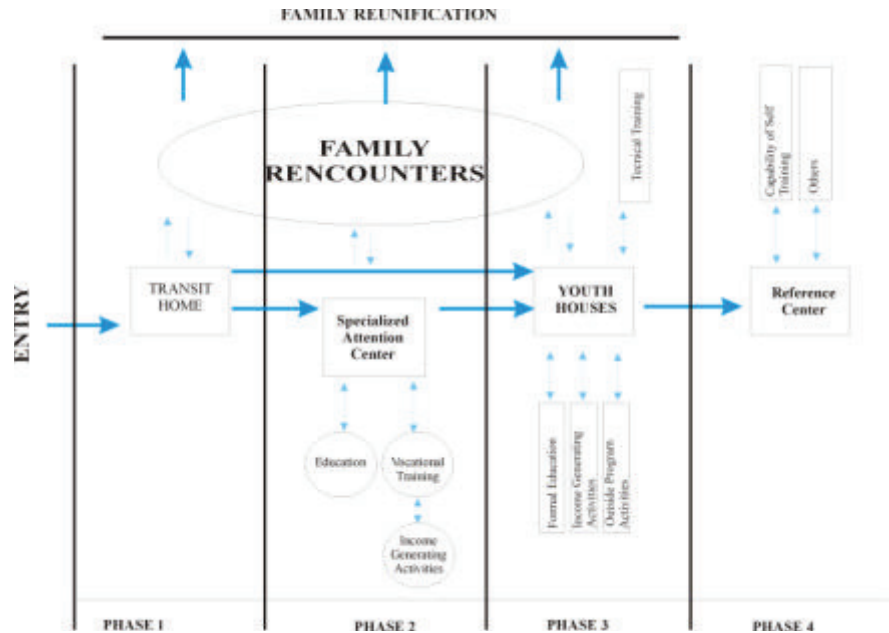


The 64 new children attended correspond to 38% of the total of children attended during the period, representing an increase in the monthly average of children accessing the Program, from 17 to 21 children.

Most of the children attended come from the departments of Antioquia, Cundinamarca and Valle del Cauca, with a more urban than rural profile, as for example in Antioquia, where the excombatant children mostly were involved in intelligence work in the major cities.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

## V. PROCESS EVALUATION



### 1. Phase 1: Transit Homes

Name of the project: *Kairós*  
 Category: *Transit Home*  
 Institution: *Asociación Cristiana de Integración Familiar (ACIF)*  
 Location: *Bogotá, D.C.*

During the month of January, the transit home Kairós attended and protected six children accordingly<sup>13</sup>. The attention was concentrated on the following four areas:

- ✓ Health: Physical development, nutrition, medical attention, ophthalmology, among others.
- ✓ Development and education: A diagnosis on the educational level of each child was made and workshops were organized in the areas of literature, video, children's rights, personal and social development, as well as in carpentry, music and painting, among others.
- ✓ Participation: Recreational activities were organized, such as excursions to different parts of the city, sport and social activities.
- ✓ Protection: A folder on the family history of each child was prepared and his or her family was contacted.

After this initial experience and the expiring of the contract, some Terms of Reference were detailed and sent to the ICBF in order for them to directly engage another NGO to continue with this service. This is considered a major success, as the ICBF will assume the cost for the services offered by the new NGO employed.

<sup>13</sup> The contract with Kairós expired on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January.

### *Activities*

1. The reception and attention of six excombatant children during the month of January.
2. The preparation and delivery of a final technical and financial report.
3. The preparation of some Terms of Reference to the ICBF, in order to continue this service.
4. The acceptance of various proposals for the employment of an NGO to continue with the services offered at the transit home, under the coordination of the ICBF.

### *Results*

1. Six children attended during the month of January.
2. 110 children attended in total (from the 19<sup>th</sup> of July, 2001 to the 31<sup>st</sup> of January, 2002)
3. One technical report prepared and presented.
4. Suggestions made to the ICBF on an attention strategy for this Program phase.
5. Terms of Reference detailed for the new contract.

### *Difficulties*

1. Difficulties in finding a suitable NGO for the opening of another transit home. At the end of the period, still no new transit home had been found.

### **Family**

The organization of family encounters continued during the period in the cities of Bogotá and Bucaramanga. The experience of these encounters was detailed in a qualitative study, characterizing the families after having lost at least one of its children to the armed groups.<sup>14</sup> A total of 35 family encounters were organized; 29 in Bogotá and six in the city of Bucaramanga.

In March, some Terms of Reference were detailed in order to engage the services of *ACJ Colombia*, with the purpose to take advantage of their experience and methodology in the work with families and in order to make use of the recommendations compiled in the study on family encounters.

### *Activities*

1. The organization of family encounters in coordination with the ICBF, the Specialized Attention Centers, the families themselves and Fundación Salud y Vida.
2. Support to the families in the transportation to Bogotá or Bucaramanga.
3. Psychosocial support to the children in the context of family encounters.
4. Presentation of the results from the family encounters.
5. Preparation of some Terms of Reference and notification to the ACJ Colombia.

### *Results*

1. A total of 35 family encounters, of which 14 correspond to the quarter.
2. Two studies completed: a) The situation of children reintegrated to their families; and b) Reintegration and family reunification.
3. The identification of one of the causes to why the family does not visit the excombatant child - they think that the child is a transgressor without right to visits.
4. The establishment of a space for understanding of the excombatant child on behalf of the families, through the family encounters.
5. Characterization of the family encounters: Mothers made 70% of the visits. 44% were members of the nuclear family and the rest were extensive family members. Their origins are from rural areas in 14 departments, but principally from Valle, Antioquia, Nariño, Caquetá and Cauca.
6. Identification of the cost of each family encounter with the duration of four days: 120 USD for Bogotá and 78 USD for Bucaramanga.
7. The Process for Family Encounters was completed.
8. Checklists for the reception, attention and family encounters were finished.
9. All results will be used as inputs for ICBF's new family policy.

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<sup>14</sup> See document attached: "Inserción Familiar Niñas, Niños Y Jóvenes Desvinculados Del Conflicto Armado", March 2002

### *Difficulties*

1. It was only possible to locate 8 children out of a total of 38, when trying to evaluate the family reintegration, due to the socioeconomic context and the presence of armed groups in the areas where the families live.

## **2. Phase 2: Specialized Attention Centers (C.A.E)**

### **A. Attention centers within the IOM/USAID Program<sup>15</sup>**

*Name of the project:* "Casa Puertas Abiertas"  
*Category:* Specialized Attention Centers  
*Institution:* Don Bosco Foundation  
*Location:* The district of Agua Blanca in Cali, Valle del Cauca

At the end of the period, the foundation Don Bosco had attended 24 children. Motivation and establiity has been achivied by engaging the children in workshops of electricity, carpentry, mechanics and computation.

In the area of vocational training, a bakery was opened on the request of the children that had concluded one of the workshops and obtained a title. The bakery is open four hours a week and the production goes to the 400 displaced and excombatant children.

Another aspect that is popular among the children is the recreational and cultural activities that are organized in the afternoons and during the weekends.

Further, the encounter between the excombatant children and the other children attending the foundation has permitted the excombatant children to get in contact with other children in a vulnerable situation, but without the protection of an integral attention program. The result has been a greater understanding of the Program and their situation.



Workshop - Puertas Abiertas

Also, some of the excombatant children became part of the "Pascua"<sup>16</sup> juvenil; an activity that the foundation is organizing in order to invite the children to get to know and live different experiences.

### *Activities*

1. Implementation of project activities.
2. Preparation of monthly reports on the project development and the participation of each child.
3. Follow-up and supervision on behalf of the ICBF and the IOM.
4. Accompaniment on behalf of the Operational Committee with the participation of the regional IOM office, the regional ICBF office and the Direction of the regional CAE
5. Organization of workshop for the evaluation of activities and planning for 2002, with the participation of the Family Lawyer in region Valle, ICBF and the IOM regional office
6. Analysis of the financial quarter report.
7. Second disbursement.
8. Participation in the international seminar "Resiliencia - cómo desvictimizar la víctima" (Resiliency Seminar).



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Seminar - Cali

<sup>15</sup> These centers are financed through the USAID/ IOM Program and will assumed by the ICBF at the end of the Program.

<sup>16</sup> "Pascua": the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

### Results

1. Six new children attended during the quarter.
2. A total of 24 children attended (15 boys and 9 girls) from the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 2001 to the 31 of March 2002.
3. Motivation and interest in vocational training generated among the children.
4. Social reintegration.
5. Technical team strengthened in the work with excombatant children.

### Difficulties

1. Difficulties in the coordination between the central and local ICBF office, when it came to the follow-up and supervision of the contract.

*Name of the project:* ASPERLINDA  
*Category:* Specialized Attention Center  
*Institution:* ASPERLA  
*Location:* Marinilla in the department of Antioquia

During this quarter ASPERLA has initiated the attention process with 23 children, after a first phase of reception. After an initial adaptation period, the center has continued with an evaluation process, a situational analysis of each kid in the area of health, education and vocational interests. At the same time, the center started the work of identifying and contacting the families for a future family encounter.

ASPERLA has attended a total of 23 children during the quarter, principally between the age of 16 and 17 years. Not all of them have had the same profile as the children attended in previous periods. Between January and March, the center received excombatant children that belonged to the urban militias and that were involved in intelligence work and support to the armed groups.



### Activities

1. Reception of children remitted by a judge or the Family Lawyer
2. Implementation of project activities.
3. Coordination with the regional and national ICBF office.
4. Support from the IOM to the project.
5. Workshop for the evaluation of activities and planning for 2002, with the participation of the regional ICBF.



### Results

1. Opening of a specialized attention center in the Antioquia region.
2. 27 excombatant children received and attended.
3. The constitution of a team of professionals specialized in the attention of excombatant children.

### *Difficulties*

1. Difficulties in the coordination between the regional and local ICBF office, when it came to the follow-up and supervision of the contract, due to the location of the center.

*Name of the project:* Buendía  
*Category:* Specialized Attention Center  
*Institution:* Macondo  
*Location:* The municipality of Chía in the department of Cundinamarca

The specialized attention center Buendía succeeded in strengthening its attention model, incorporating the topics of prevention and investigation and involved various professionals committed to social construction, in its interdisciplinary team.

Several investigation tools were developed with the assessment of Save the Children UK and are now used in the daily work with the children and in the strengthening of the institution. Included in the investigation component is the development of an educational proposal together with the children, under the pedagogical principles of a " Escuela Nueva " (New School).

The project executor has also implemented various projects in the area of vocational training in the areas of handicraft, confectionary, production and sales of bakery products, in order to prepare the children for the labor market and the social reintegration. These activities have been matched with art and aesthetics.

Lastly, after the rupture of the peace negotiations, the direction of Macondo prepared a contingency plan and increased the quota from 20 to 30 children until the new transit home is opened. In this sense, until March the center attended 23 children.



### *Activities*

1. Implementation of each project purpose and activity planned for the quarter.
2. Institutional strengthening through workshops and continuous internal evaluation.
3. Financial support - House rental.
4. Design of prevention and investigation proposals.
5. Design of a set of variables and indicators for the evaluation of the intervention model.

### *Results*

1. 23 excombatant children attended.
2. A total of 62 children attended from the 6<sup>th</sup> of July 2001 to the 31 of March 2002.
3. A qualified project proposal

### *Difficulties*

1. Frequent change of personnel within the technical team.



*Name of the project:* Remedios La Bella  
*Category:* Specialized Attention Center  
*Institution:* Macondo  
*Location:* The municipality of Chía in the department of Cundinamarca

In the same way as the Specialized Attention Center "Buendía" mentioned above, "La Bella" acquired institutional experience and strengthened its attention model with the assessment of Save the Children UK. More specifically, "La Bella" implemented vocational training activities in the areas of production of leather items, dolls and bakery products among others. The purpose is to offer the children the possibility to explore their interests and capabilities in a wide range of vocational and cultural areas. In the same way, the children have received educational and pedagogic training in order to be able to reintegrate into the regular school system.

#### *Activities*

1. Qualifying of attention model and proposal.
2. The coordination of a qualified team of professionals.
3. Institutional strengthening with the assessment of Save the Children UK.
4. Financial support - House rental.
5. Implementation of each project purpose and activity planned for the quarter.
6. Design of the vocational training component.

#### *Results*

1. 22 excombatant children attended.
2. A total of 55 children attended from the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2001 to the 31 of March 2002.
3. A qualified project proposal

#### *Difficulties*

There were no difficulties.

### ***B. Specialized Attention Centers within the agreement with the ICBF<sup>17</sup>***

*Name of the project:* Arco Iris  
*Category:* Specialized Attention Center  
*Institution:* Punto de Luz  
*Location:* The municipality of Tenjo in the department of Cundinamarca.

This center has distinguished itself due to its innovative and didactical attention model, based on the creation of spaces for reflection and meditation; as well as on the organization of sport activities. Further, the center is also offering a range of educational, vocational, pedagogic and therapeutic activities.



<sup>17</sup> These centers are hired by the ICBF and supported by the IOM/USAID Program and Save the Children UK

### *Activities*

1. The reception and attention of new excombatant children.
2. Implementation of project activities.
3. Participation of the children in the project "Escojo la Palabra", organized by CERLALC
4. Qualification of the attention model and proposal, with the support of Save the Children UK.
5. House rental.

### *Results*

1. 13 excombatant children attended during the quarter, out of 46 children attended in total.
2. Reintegration with the community.

### *Difficulties*

1. A lack of water at the installations, the reason why it suggested that the center change location.
2. A shortage in personnel in the educational area.

*Name of the project:*

*Agarta*

*Category:*

*Specialized Attention Center*

*Institution:*

*Semillas de Paz*

*Location:*

*The municipality of Floridablanca in the department of Santander*

Agarta is the new Specialized Attention Center in the department of Santander. It opened its doors to the beneficiaries on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January this year and started to attend the children within the program "Huellas" coordinated by the ICBF; a program that closed due to the short comes in the attention given to the children.

The children attended by Agarta, benefit from various activities, such as: school reintegration and vocational training in computers. 27 children have been attended during the quarter.



### *Activities*

1. The reception and attention of new excombatant children.
2. Implementation of project activities.
3. Participation of the children in the project "Escojo la Palabra", organized by CERLALC
4. Reconstruction of an attention model and proposal, with the support of Save the Children UK.

### *Results*

1. An agreement signed with Agarta for the attention of excombatant children in the department of Santander.
2. Support given to the ICBF regional office in Santander.
3. 27 excombatant children attended.
4. School reintegration.

### *Difficulties*

1. Frequent change of personnel within the technical team, some of which did not have the professional profile required for the attention of the children.



### ***C. Institutional strengthening of the Specialized Attention Centers***

#### *The development component*

After having presented a proposal to the committees of each attention center, CERLALC initiated its fieldwork with the children in each attention center selected. The project has been very welcomed by the children, who find the audiovisual tools and the children's literature used to be an innovative and a didactic way of development. CERLALC identified that the children have ability for the oral tradition, i.e. the storytelling of legends, myths and tales.

During the quarter, the activities were concentrated on the creation of confidence in the technical team from CERLALC and the diffusion of information about the project and the purpose is to continue to strengthen the cultural proposal to each center.

The idea is that the children will execute the work with the community, after having assumed the methodology and tools given by the CERLALC and that they themselves will generate a reintegration process through the presentation of cultural and educational activities.

#### *Activities*

1. Selection and purchase of audiovisual material in coordination with the team from IOM<sup>18</sup>.
2. Design of workshops, evaluation and follow-up tools on behalf of the CERLALC
3. Implementation of project activities according to the plan of action.
4. Preparation, presentation and evaluation of the technical and financial quarter report.
5. Feedback on Quarterly Report presented by CERLALC
6. Discussions on the program's development.

#### *Results*

1. Initiation of activities with the children.
2. Design of the cultural activities to be implemented with the children.

#### *Difficulties*

1. Frequent replacement of children and professionals in the CAEs
2. Low acceptance of the project on behalf of some of the professionals working at the CAEs.
3. Delay in the accomplishment of some objectives and results to be obtained during the quarter.
4. Lack of photographic material of the activities done.

#### *The vocational component*

Various projects are developed within this component. The foundation "Apoyo" initiated a training process in the area of making bread together with five children in CAE "La Bella" and Corporation "Macondo", responsible for the center, succeeded in selling the bread to various institutions, recovering the investment and being able to pay a bonus to the children that participated in the project. This experience showed the importance of hiring a professional in the subject to teach the children (in this case a baker), not only the profession, but also some general ideas on how to run a business. The idea is to continue the project next quarter in CAEs "La Bella" and "Buendía", as the infrastructure is already installed and the children are trained in the profession of making bread.

Further, a consultant from ICBF and IOM has accompanied the vocational workshops developed in each CAE described earlier and has developed a proposal on how to work in the aesthetic area as a link between therapy and art. The children chose to participate in areas as music, theatre and movies, among others. The results of this consultancy and the work of the children will be presented next quarter.

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<sup>18</sup> See Annex II: List of material delivered to the CAEs within the project "Escojo la Palabra" (CERLALC / Eje de Formación)

#### *Activities*

1. The organization of the training of five children in the art of making bread.
2. Commercialization of the products generated by the children.
3. Follow-up of the project.
4. Development of the proposals in the area of vocational training in each CAE and youth house.
5. The employment of a consultant in the vocational area.

#### *Results*

1. A bakery installed in the CAE "LaBella".
2. Five excombatant children trained in the art of making bread.
3. A proposal developed in the area of vocational training.

#### *Difficulties*

1. The area of vocational training covers not all children.
2. Weaknesses were found in the project of training children in the art of making bread.

#### *The training component*

Save the Children UK continued its work in strengthening the CAEs "Macondo", "Punto de Luz" and "Semillas de Paz"'s attention models and proposals. In this sense, these CAEs have incorporated new concepts and ideas in their attention models and have redefined their objectives and methodologies in order to make them more solid. For example, the CAE "Macondo" created new evaluation tools and instruments for the follow-up of its activities.

Another aspect developed by Save the Children UK, was the strengthening of the technical teams in the CAEs in Santander, Valle and Antioquia, by the hiring of a specialist in social work.

At the evaluation and preparation seminar, it became evident that it is necessary to promote the communication between the CAEs in order to share experiences, something that demands the design of a coordination strategy for this component.

#### *Activities*

1. Follow-up and evaluation of the institutional strengthening strategy in each CAE.
2. Appointment of a consultant in each CAE included in the agreement with Save the Children UK.
3. Appointment of a psychoanalyst to support the CAEs.

#### *Results*

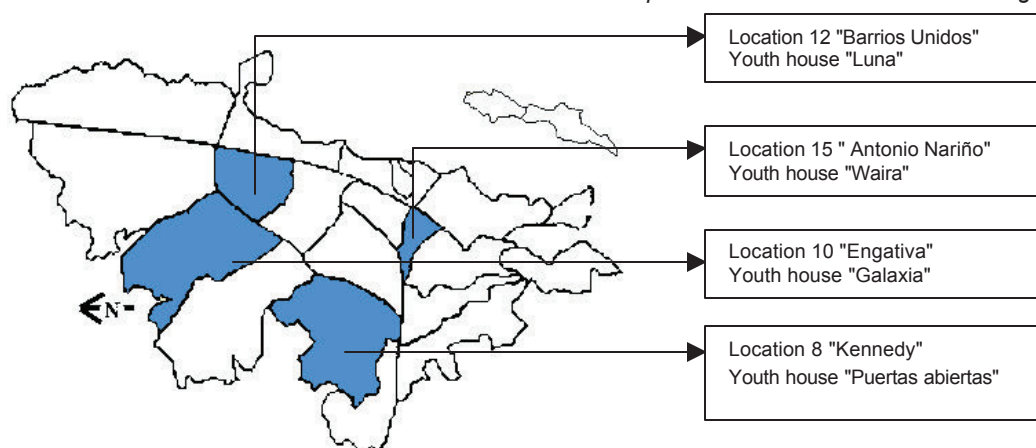
1. More solid attention proposals on behalf of the CAEs, after the training organized by the Save the Children
2. Stronger CAEs.
3. More capable and professional teams at the youth houses.

#### *Difficulties*

1. Change of personnel, leading to the creation of another contract to continue with this line of work in the Specialized Attention Centers and the Youth Houses.

### 3. Phase 3: Youth Houses

Map #3: Location of Youth Houses in Bogotá



During this quarter, the third phase of the Program was initiated with the opening of four youth houses with the capacity each to attend 5/6 children, in coordination with the foundation "Rayuela", who has developed a proposal directed towards the social reintegration of the excombatant children.

A total of 23 children (20 boys and 3 girls) have accessed the youth houses and five children are living in each of three of the installations together with a guide and six children are living in the fourth youth house. The children come from the following CAEs:

Table # 2: Origin of the children accessing the youth houses

CAEs	# of Children
Arco Iris	9
Remedios La Bella	8
Buendía	5
Kairós	1

The access to the youth houses has been organized by the ICBF, who considers them the best option to social reintegration, as these children cannot join their families due to security reasons or because of the family's socioeconomic condition. Therefore, the youth houses have concentrated their efforts preparing the children for the labor market.



Further, the foundation "Rayuela" has together with the ICBF accomplished to update the papers of each child in order to guarantee their right to identity. In the same way, efforts have been put on locating and contacting the families, in order to promote family encounters.

Additionally, the foundation has promoted an educational program for the validation of the children's studies in primary and secondary level. Two programs have been implemented: one in formal education and the other in a non-traditional program. Since February, five children have benefited from the formal educational program, facilitating their incorporation in a secondary school run by a specialized educational center. In the same way, these children do also receive support from a teacher

working at the foundation. The work with the children at primary school has also initiated, but they have not yet done their final tests.

Sport activities and the organization of a computer workshop have been carried out within the non-traditional educational program.

The purpose of the educational program is to guarantee the children's right to education and to facilitate their social, personal and economic development with dignity.

As a complement to the educational program, activities have been promoted in the area of vocational training and cultural events. For example, a project called "Proyecto Arte" is benefiting six children in the production of handicraft. These children have not only learned the art of handicraft, but have also commercialized their production, in that way receiving a bonus for their work. Another project is the exploration of the art of photography, in which several children have participated under the supervision of a professional photographer.



Lastly, it is worth mentioning that five children participated as promoters in a community-based project to the benefit of children in a vulnerable situation. Even though they received a minimum salary for their participation, the most valuable result was the contact and exchange of experiences with other children affected by the violence<sup>19</sup>.

#### *Activities*

1. Signing of agreement with three youth houses.
2. Organization and equipment of the youth houses.
3. Reception and adjustment of the children.
4. Establishment of certain rules together with the guides.
5. Updating of the children's identification papers.
6. Enrollment and accompaniment of the children in the traditional school system.
7. Employment of teachers for the educational program.
8. Incorporation of the children as support to a community-based project with children in a vulnerable situation.
9. Implementation of vocational training and cultural events.
10. Coordination on an internal level and with the counterparts.

#### *Results*

1. Three youth houses launched.
2. 23 excombatant children attended during the quarter.
3. 9 children registered in the Office of Civilian Registry.
4. 10 children benefited from family encounters.
5. 23 children benefiting from a formal education program.
6. A proposal on vocational training developed.

#### *Difficulties*

1. Delay in the rental and equipment of the youth house installations.
2. When initiating the project, the majority of the children did not have any updated identification papers and their legal status was not resolved, reason why efforts had to be put into solving these problems.

#### **A. *Income-generating activities***

The experience obtained while implementing this third phase is based on the exploration of the possibilities to succeed in the social reintegration of the children that for one reason or other cannot achieve a secure and sustainable family reunification. One of the possibilities was identified when starting to work with income-generating projects.

In March, a questionnaire was designed and applied with the purpose to determine the interest and vocational profile of the children. It was established that the children's vocational interest is directly related with the capacity building experienced within the program. For example, the majority of the children participated in the training of making bread, and many of them affirmed their interest in the

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<sup>19</sup> See Lessons learned

area. This is only one example on how the children's expectations are related with things that are familiar to them and to the support given.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, even though this is an indicator on the children's lack of certainty on what to do next, the purpose is exactly to give them tools and options so that they can make their own decisions with confidence. In conclusion, the children need support in the process of making decisions. Nevertheless, the questionnaire also demonstrated the children's interest and willingness to receive vocational training and start incomegenerating projects.

Some conclusions drawn from the questionnaire are as follows:

- ✓ To start income-generating activities in the areas promoted, such as a bakery or a workshop for handicraft.
- ✓ To start work related courses.
- ✓ To develop the capacities acquired before and during the stay with the armed groups, such as: domestic activities, agriculture, nursing, among others.
- ✓ To develop the capacities acquired during the stay at the CAEs, as for example: carpentry and bread making; etc.
- ✓ To promote an understanding of basic business administration.
- ✓ Examine the educational level of each child, before starting any income-generating project.

#### *Activities*

1. Design and application of a questionnaire on the children's vocational interest.
2. Meetings with Rayula and the children in order to discuss and coordinate future income-generating projects. The emphasis was put on the children's participation in every step.
3. The development of feasibility-studies of the future income-generating projects together with the children.
4. Feasibility-studies with the children for future income-generating activities.
5. The development of a project proposal and feasibility-study on behalf of four of the children attended, for the opening of a café called "Café Cultural La Maga".
6. The drafting of some terms of reference for the appointment of an NGO for the execution of the projects.



#### *Results*

1. A detailed analysis, based on a questionnaire applied on 23 children from Bogotá and 6 from Bucaramanga, on possible future income-generating projects.
2. A proposal formulated by four children, for the opening of a café called "Café Cultural La Maga"
3. A proposal formulated by two children at the CAE in Floridablanca in Santander, for the opening of a bakery.

<sup>20</sup> See Annex IV: Instruments used in the development of a vocational analysis for income-generating projects in the youth houses in Bogotá

### Difficulties

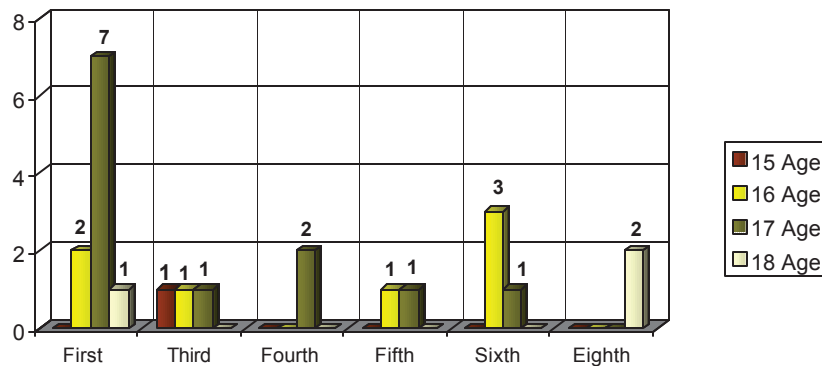
1. Low educational level among the children, something that will affect the feasibility of the income-generating projects.
2. Indecisiveness among the children, something that delayed the formulation of possible future income-generating projects.
3. Lack of consensus within the team in charge, something that delayed the process.

### B. Education

Various activities were carried out in order to guarantee the children's right to education, especially in two areas: the exploration of educational alternatives; and the study of the educational level of the program beneficiaries.

On one hand, it was established that the Ministry of Education offers a variety of pedagogic tools with flexible and individual methodologies that can be used in the work with the excombatant children; and on the other hand it was detected that the majority of the children attending the youth houses had not yet finished primary school (see Graphic #8).

Graphic #8: Educational level on the children attending the youth houses



Given the elements mentioned above, it was considered as important to develop a proposal including the following aspects:

- ✓ To guarantee basic knowledge such as reading writing and mathematics.
- ✓ To establish a qualified learning process with detailed results.
- ✓ To offer the children the possibility to pass primary school and get certified by the Ministry of Education.
- ✓ To create an educational environment respecting gender equality, individuality, human rights and ethics.
- ✓ To implement a pedagogic, active and participative educational strategy.

### Activities

1. Specification of some terms of references based on the ideas presented above to be analyzed by the committee responsible for this area of work.<sup>21</sup>
2. The exploration of present educational alternatives.
3. The study of the educational level of the program beneficiaries on behalf of the ICBF.
4. Identification of vocational courses in coherence with the interest of the children benefited by the program.

<sup>21</sup> See Annex V: Terms of Reference for educational options



### *Results*

1. One technical team organized with the participation the IOM, the ICBF and Save the Children UK.
2. The detection of the children's vocational interests, permitting the possibility to give a more integral education.
3. The identification of the need to work the social reintegration strategy from two angles: formal education; and income-generating activities.
4. Two scholarships awarded, as a pilot experience in Cali.

### *Difficulties*

1. A previous lack of information on the children's educational level.
2. Weak coordination between the different phases, impeding a continuous education process.

## **4. THE "RUTA JURÍDICA" (LEGAL PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW FOR EXCOMBATANT CHILDREN)**

The Human Rights Onbudsman Office" presented the study "Ruta Jurídica" and a proposal on contents and arguments directed toward four target groups: judges, teachers, local authorities, and NGOs. It was decided to edit three educational modules in an easy language in order to start a mass-information strategy and training directed towards the target groups already mentioned.

The "Ruta Jurídica" is the first national instrument directed towards the management of the legal situation of excombatant children<sup>22</sup>. Nevertheless, this instrument had to be validated by a training-program with judges and legal experts, the reason why the document was edited and published, in order to get the experts' opinion. Therefore, the ICBF and the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office guided a training-program with judges, Family Lawyers and other law experts in four regions where the Program is implemented and will expand the training to the rest of the regions.

### *Activities*

1. Analysis of the documents presented by the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office.
2. Working-sessions with the Human Rights Ombudsman's Office in order to create the "Ruta Jurídica".
3. Edition and publishing of the "Ruta Jurídica".
4. The planning of a training-program directed towards judges and local authorities.

### *Results*

1. 1000 examples of the "Ruta Jurídica" published.
2. The "Ruta Jurídica" complemented with a dossier of both national and international legal instruments.
3. A training-program detailed and 50 judges, ombudsmen and lawyers invited (11th of April in Bucaramanga, 26<sup>th</sup> of April in Cali, 6th of May in Bogotá and the 15<sup>th</sup> of May in Medellín).

### *Difficulties*

1. Delay in the editing of the "Ruta Jurídica" directed towards the other target groups.
2. Some of the normatives detailed in the "Ruta Jurídica" are only valid until the last of December this year as they were issued during a very specific situation; the peace negotiations<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> See Document Attached: "Ruta Jurídica y fundamentos normativos, para niños, niñas y jóvenes desvinculados del conflicto armado", March 2002

<sup>23</sup> More specifically, law 418 from 1997. Law 548 will be extended.

## 5. SHARING INFORMATION

### A. Publications

Up to now, the "Ruta Jurídica" has been the most important publication within the Program, but also other material has been published, such as a video about the attention program called "Pasos de Vida" (Life Steps).

Further, the following texts are in the process of being edited:

- ✓ A notebook on reflections
- ✓ A diagnosis on excombatant children.
- ✓ Pedagogic models
- ✓ Investigation on the families with excombatant children.

Other material designed is:

- ✓ The program's logotype<sup>24</sup>
- ✓ A program folder<sup>25</sup>
- ✓ Book Mark

#### *Activities*

1. Preparation of the editing and publication of the "Ruta Jurídica".
2. Formation of teams of professionals within the program for the publication of their works.
3. Creation of a plan of activities for the presentation of one publication every second month.

#### *Results*

1. Shared experience in the field of attention to and investigation on excombatant children.

#### *Difficulties*

1. Delay in the publication of some material produced.

### B. Workshop for the design of a plan of action

It was considered necessary to evaluate the results obtained and problems identified after one year's implementation and to plan future activities, the reason why a workshop for the design of a plan of action was organized in February.

#### *Activities*

1. A two day workshop in order to evaluate the Program and plan for future activities, with the participation of all national and regional members within the Program, from the ICBF and the IOM.



#### *Results*

1. The coordination between the ICBF and the IOIM.
2. Evaluation of the results and the obstacles met in every Program area.
3. The creation of a plan of activities for each Program area for the first six months of 2002, including dates and persons responsible
4. Identified the need to qualify the attention component.
5. The results from the workshops were shared with every counterpart.

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<sup>24</sup> See the report's frontpage

<sup>25</sup> The folder contains both the program's logotype and the design that can be found on the lower part of this report's frontpage.



### *Difficulties*

1. Difficulties in the creation of a plan of action for the whole year, since some of the activities carried out during the first quarter of the year will determine the course to follow for the rest of the months.

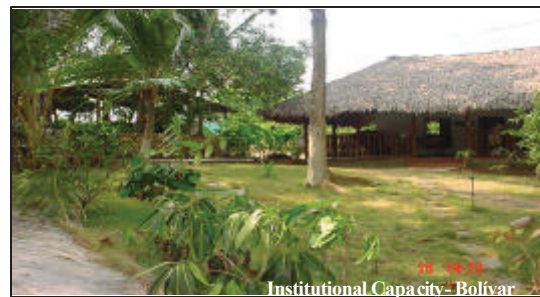
## **6. CONTINGENCY PLAN**

Due to the rupture of the peace process in February, it was considered necessary to design a contingency plan in order to attend a possible massive demobilization of children.

The plan is considering three different levels: the first one with a demobilization of 0-100 children and their incorporation in the present CAEs; the second one with the demobilization of 100-300 children; and the third one with the demobilization of more than 300 children. When it comes to the solution for the attention of more than 100 children, a study was made on the institutional capacity on a national level to respond to a massive demobilization.<sup>26</sup>

### *Activities*

1. Coordination between the IOM, the ICBF and Save the Children UK in each component of the contingency plan.
2. Coordination with the ICBF's national office in relation to the institutional mapping.
3. Development of the questionnaire for the evaluation of the institutional capacity.
4. 46 Institutions interviewed from 7 departments: Atlántico, Bolívar, Córdoba, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Risaralda y Valle.
5. Development of the database to register all the instituciones capable and willing to participate in case of a massive demobilization.



### *Results*

1. Identified the capacity to attend 715 children in an emergency, through the participation of 31 institutions out of a total of 45 institutions included in the institutional mapping.
2. Agreements made with 18 institutions for the organization of temporary shelters and with another 20 institutions for the transportation in an emergency.
3. Information obtained from the institutions interviewed about perceptions, prejudices and policies in relation to children.
4. A database created for the contingency plan.
5. Reference maps developed for each department with relevant information in case of a massive demobilization of children.



<sup>26</sup> See Annex VI: Summary on the real and potential institutional capacity to respond to a possible massive demobilization of children

## **2. Family**

1. To validate the methodology "Before, during and after" in relation to the family encounters:
  - A.) Before: analysis of the child, contact by telephone, preparation of the encounter.
  - B.) During: reception of the family, accompaniment by a social worker during the visit, commitments and goodbye procedures.
  - C.) After: evaluation, accompaniment of the child to the CAE, study of the possibility to sustainable family reunification.
2. To make the families understand that the children have the right to a family, a right to visits and that he or she is not a criminal, but a victim. The children's expectation on the family encounter is the forgiveness and the parents' expectation is just to see their children and know that they are not in prison. This relation between the excombatant child and its family makes it important to incorporate an area of work with the community on the legal aspects of the child's situation with the family in order to reestablish its rights and understanding of the problem.
3. To guarantee a minimum of two to three family encounters for a successful family reunification.<sup>28</sup>
4. Establishment of the average cost per person for each Family Encounter, \$45 daily (USD 20).

## **VII. PRIORITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER**

In general, it has been decided to concentrate on strengthening the attention process and the initiation of a broader prevention work, as well as on social reintegration. The priorities in each area are as follows:

1. Institutional supply
  - ✓ To establish strategies in order to guarantee the continuity between each phase.
  - ✓ To initiate a qualified pedagogic proposal through the whole attention process, based on the needs of the children.
  - ✓ To define the attention in the health area.
2. Family
  - ✓ To strengthen the process of family reunification; to unify criterions and develop instruments to enable the registration of information.
  - ✓ To continue the work with the family members, based on the proposals made in the study completed.
3. Supervision
  - ✓ To create and implement general guiding-lines for the supervision and a system for evaluation, based on specific indicators.
  - ✓ To accompany the teams responsible for the supervision.
  - ✓ To supervise, evaluate and accompany new intervention proposals.
  - ✓ To create a technical committee in Antioquia with the participation of the IOM and ICBF's regional and local office.
5. Social reintegration
  - ✓ To open youth houses in Bucaramanga and Cali.
  - ✓ To start income-generating activities with the children attended through the youth houses and that find themselves in the process of family integration.
6. Legal status
  - ✓ To continue the workshops within the "Ruta Jurídica" with the local authorities.

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<sup>28</sup> Exchange rate 1 USD = 2,260 Colombian pesos

7. Sharing Information

- ✓ The launch of the book "Warriors without shadow"; the video "Steps of Life"; and the "Legal Procedures to Follow for Excombatant Children", in an event organized by ICBF, IOM and Save the Children UK.
- ✓ Reception of proposals on the NGO to organize the painting competition among excombatant children.

8. New areas of work and new actors

- ✓ To evaluate the experiences obtained in the area of prevention and depending on the results, increase the coverage to departments with a high level of recruitment and/ or disengagement from the armed groups.
- ✓ To start to work with excombatant children from minority groups in the department of Cauca.

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